

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4748

1. Name

Historic 411 - 417 Griffin Court
and / common

2. Location

street & number 411 - 417 Griffin Court
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21231 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	X occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
X building(s)	X private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	X private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	X yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number
city, town state & zip code telephone

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

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7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☒ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check One

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check One

☒ original site
☐ moved:
date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of two-bay-wide, two-story brick houses with low-pitched gable roofs are typical of the small alley houses built in Baltimore in the 1850s and 1860s, often along especially narrow secondary alley streets running perpendicularly off the main "alley" street. This particular group of houses is a good example of the kind of house built in a "blind" alley, with access from only one end.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide, and occupy lots 42' deep. Each house is only two rooms deep. The pitch of the gable roof is only slightly lower than that of a Federal-period house of the 1830s, but there are no dormer windows, and the houses overall are characteristic of the type of two-story, low-pitched gable-roofed alley houses of this period. The houses are probably constructed in common bond, but all of the facades are now covered with formstone. Originally each house had a simple brick corbelled cornice, but all are now obscured by the stucco and formstone. Chimneys are located in the middle of the front and rear rooms and each house also has a chimney at the rear end of the kitchen addition.

The original door and window openings have been completely obscured by the stucco and formstone coverings and all windows are filled with replacement 1/1 sash. No original doors survive and the row shows a mix of replacement door styles, all surmounted by a single light transom. The houses have no basements, the entrances being reached by a low, single concrete or brick step.

The houses are basically two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace.

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8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	X community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	X architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	X social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	humanitarian	
X 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportatic	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specif	

Specific dates 1861

Builder/Architect Edward W. Robinson

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses are significant as being representative of a surviving group of extremely modest two-story, gable-roofed houses built in Fells Point in the 1850s and 1860s to serve as inexpensive housing for the influx of newly arrived immigrant families seeking work in harbor-related activities or in the first small factories being built at this time. Most of these houses were held as rental property and most were located along narrow alley streets, or, as is the case here, along even narrower courts. In terms of design, the houses are basically the descendants of earlier Federal-style working class housing built in the early decades of the century, but without the usual dormer story of such houses. Because there is no dormer story the roof slope is much less steep in these later versions of the style. The houses are quite tiny, with two small rooms on each floor and a centrally located, tightly winding, narrow staircase.

This group of houses was built by Edward W. Robinson, who developed this entire block between the early 1850s and the 1870s. Although other units in the block sold to German-American owner-occupants, Robinson sold these four to an investor interested in their rental income. In this way, people of various income levels were able to live in the same block; if they couldn't afford the \$700 - \$900 cost of houses on Regester St., they could rent a house in Griffin Ct. for about \$8 a month while saving to purchase a home of their own.

The houses are especially significant as being located in the oldest part of Fells Point, only a few blocks from the water, and represent an integral part of the history of this National Register district. Slated for demolition in the 1960s as part of the planned East-West highway connection existing segments of I-95 to the north and south of the city, this part of Fells Point was saved by local preservation activists who created the Fells Point National Register District in 1969.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

city, town Baltimore

date June 2000

telephone

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

Maryland Historical Trust

100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023

S. WASHINGTON

S. SWOLFE

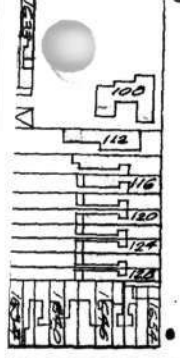
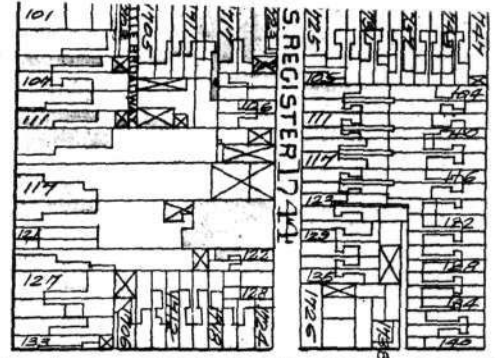
S. ANN

SOUTH

B-4748

411-417 Griffin Ct.
BALTO MD

S REGISTER 1744

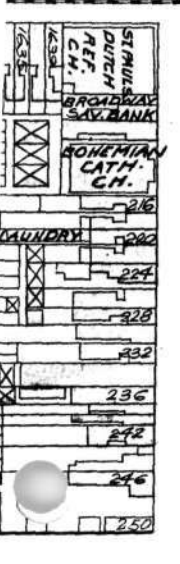
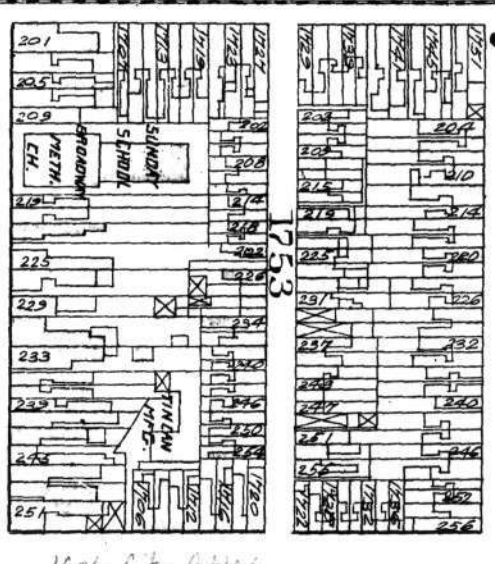
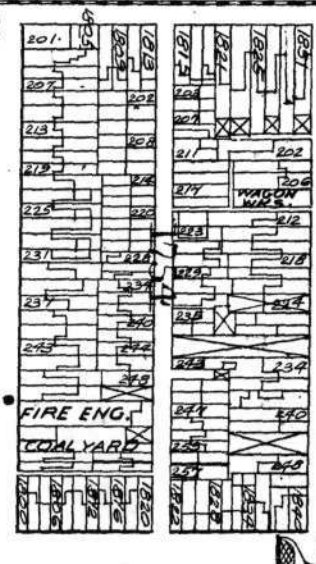
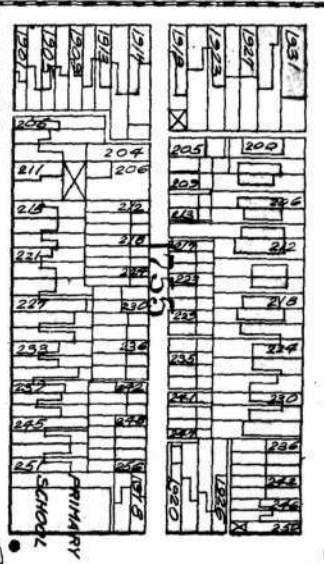


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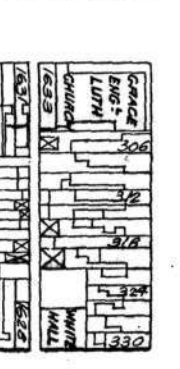
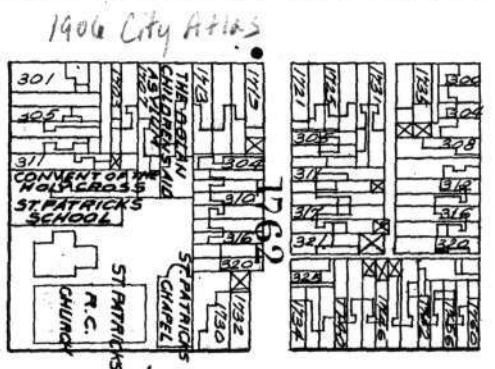
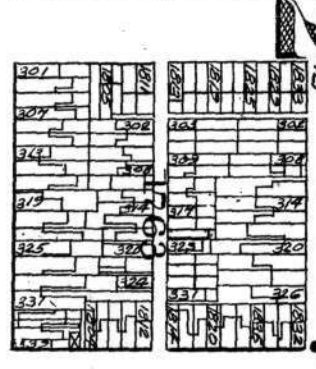
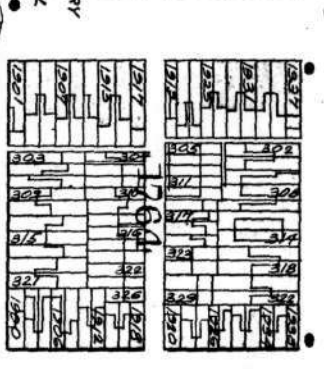


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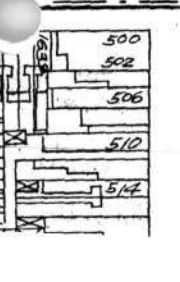
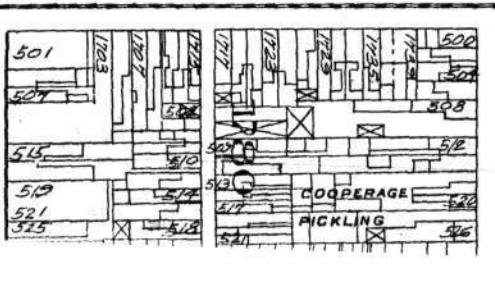
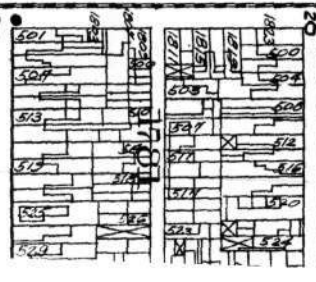
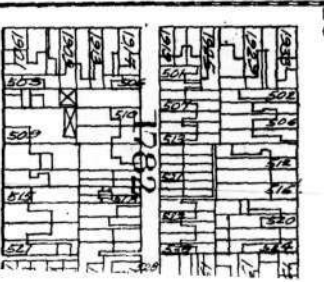


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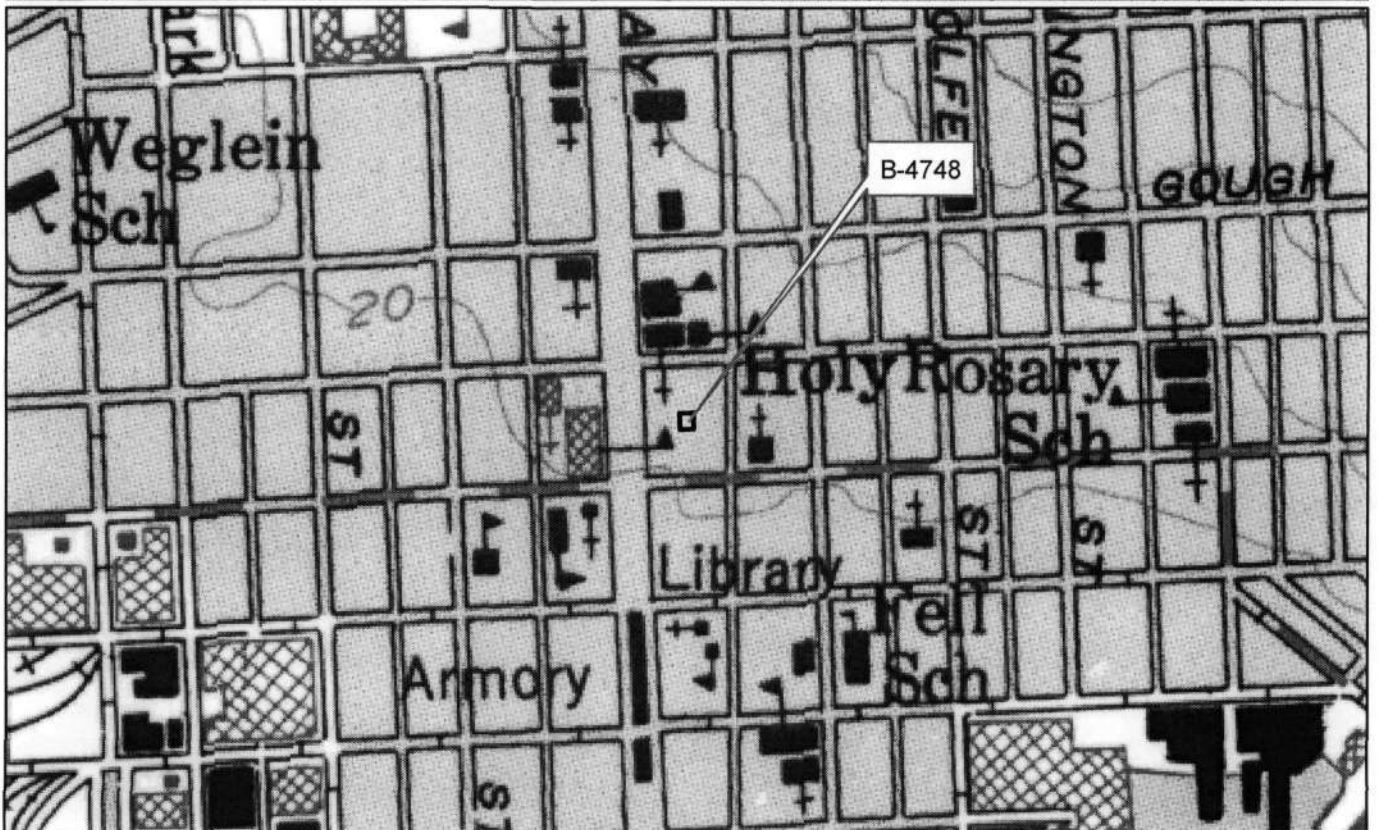
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B-4748
411-417 Griffin Court
Block 1711 Lots 094-097
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.





B-4748

411-417 Griffin
Court

BALTO. MD

M. Hayward

6/00

MD SHPD

1/1

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